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Ministry of Forests and Range
British Columbia Institute of Technology
The Britco Group of Companies

PROVINCE, LOCAL COMPANY AID INDONESIAN TSUNAMI RELIEF

VANCOUVER – The Province is supporting a groundbreaking project that will see up to 3,000 homes sent to a region of Indonesia affected by the 2004 tsunami disaster, Forests and Range Minister Rich Coleman announced today.

"B.C. is a world leader in value-added wood products, and we are proud to be a part of a project that will help thousands of people who need shelter," said Coleman. "Almost one million homes are destroyed each year due to disasters, and we are looking at ways to help affected countries rebuild homes and lives."

Last year, the Province invested more than $200,000 for 10 demonstration homes, built by four B.C. companies, which were shipped to the village of Labuy near Banda Aceh in northern Sumatra. Save the Children, an independent organization working to ensure the well-being of children worldwide, has ordered 300 homes from Langley-based Britco Structures in the first phase of the project.

"Save the Children has worked in Aceh province for 30 years and remains committed to the long-term development of the province," said Charles MacCormack, president and CEO of Save the Children USA. "We are delighted to have formed a partnership with Britco and the British Columbia government, including Forestry Innovation Investment Ltd., British Columbia Institute of Technology, and the Forintek Canada Corporation, to help us bring high quality permanent housing to children and families who have suffered so much as a result of one of the worst disasters ever to hit South Asia."

The almost 500 square foot panelized homes have four rooms and take approximately three days to assemble. Britco Structures specializes in the design and construction of commercial, institutional, industrial and residential buildings.

"Britco is very proud to be part of this important reconstruction effort, we have designed and engineered a cost-effective, permanent and long-term solution that will have a real impact for dislocated families and children who were left homeless in the wake of the earthquake and tsunami," said Mike Ridley, vice president Britco Structures. "This is about rebuilding communities, rebuilding families and rebuilding a future for thousands of children in Indonesia."

Through Forestry Innovation Investment, the Province will also be financing upwards of $65,000 to help assemble the houses on site with the British Columbia Institute of Technology's School of Construction and Environment training program. BCIT will instruct and train Indonesian builders and government officials according to North American standards.

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"BCIT prides itself on working closely with government and industry to meet the demand for highly skilled workers, both locally and internationally," said Wayne Stevens, director of BCIT's Canadian Housing and Construction Centre. "We are very pleased to be working in co-operation with Forestry Innovation Investment, Britco and Save the Children to deliver training for this very special project. This partnership between industry, government and education shows the true potential of what we can do when we work together."

In September 2005, B.C. co-sponsored wood-frame construction seminars in Jakarta and Banda Aceh to showcase Canadian wood and construction methods, and to provide training and skills-development opportunities for Indonesian workers.

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